

REMARKS BY WILLIAM J. CASEY

FORDHAM ALUMNI DINNER

8 October 1981

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Father Findlay, men and women of Fordham, their beloved teachers, at least that's the way it used to be, and their distinguished guests.

It is a splendid moment for me, an honor only exceeded by my gratitude, to receive the Fordham Alumni Award for Distinguished Public Service.

My cup of gratitude to Fordham is already overflowing. First, there is the invaluable education and discipline which the Jesuits have uniquely provided in every corner of the world for more than five centuries which has stood so many of us in this room in such good stead. Then there are the continuing ties that are so thoughtfully and regularly provided on this occasion and so many others to bring back happy memories of that first walk on Rose Hill along that road which winds its way to the Administration Building, memories of the lovely rides on the Third Avenue El of the New York Central shrieking in the night, of Father Mulqueen wondering whether it was more difficult to maintain discipline in St. John's Hall or to maintain harmony in the Fordham Band, memories of how the Walter Mitty in us was so powerfully brought out on the reflected glory of Frankie Frisch, Zev Graham, Ed Danowski, Vince Lombardi, and the Seven Blacks of Granite.

With what reluctance and fear did we allow ourselves to be put through a commencement program which showed us out into the great Depression. Jobs were so scarce that most of us were forced to go to law school.

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Still, despite our failures and deficiencies, life went on. Our wives made brilliant marriages. The draft boards paid no attention and most of us were forced to go to war. Somehow, we survived and lived happily ever after. Whatever we had to face as opportunity knocked or danger threatened, whenever we had to get out of a corner, Fordham had given us something to hang onto in the rigid belief in God, in the conviction there will be a life hereafter, in a Ten Commandments that will not budge, in moral values that never change, in the belief that some things are right and some things are wrong, eternally right and eternally wrong, and above all in a sublime realization that this life in its loftiest and most exhilarating moments and all of this world's pageantry is but a trinket when compared with our eternal destiny.

I have been asked to tell you a bit this evening about my present work. I need to do this very carefully, but there are some things which need to be done to improve American intelligence. First, we must develop a bold and a winning attitude. In this, the right symbolism can be vital. Besides that, the Irish are too frequently deprived of the credit due us. When the CIA headquarters was built in Langley, Virginia, Allen Dulles, I believe he was of Welsh descent, had a statue of Nathan Hale erected to inspire American intelligence officers. It was not Nathan Hale, but Hercules Mulligan who was the intelligence hero of the American Revolution. Hercules was a young tailor who plucked secrets from British officers as he measured them for uniforms in British-occupied New York and smuggled them to Washington's headquarters in New Jersey by devious and circuitous routes running across Long Island Sound and the Hudson River. I think we can do better than Nathan Hale. It is not so much that Nathan Hale is of British descent.

What is important is that Nathan Hale got caught. In contrast, Hercules Mulligan kept delivering secrets until the British went home. He never broke his cover to the end. Today he still lies, well covered, in Trinity Churchyard, no doubt spying on his Protestant neighbors. Hercules Mulligan, not Nathan Hale, is the example we want to emulate. I intend to speak to the grounds committee about it when I return to Langley tomorrow.

There's something else I intend to do as part of my program to shake up the CIA. We are overwhelmed by the facts and other bits of information that come pouring in. The trick is to piece them together and arrive at a reliable conclusion. I intend to require every analyst and report writer in the place to study as a model of arriving at a correct conclusion from scattered and apparently unrelated facts the intelligence assessments which Judge William Mulligan, our esteemed fellow alumnus, has produced for the edification of the Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick and other audiences in this city. These assessments proved, beyond peradventure of doubt, that it was not Columbus but rather an Irish navigator named Lynch who discovered America and that it was Irish engineers led by a man named O'Hanlon, using a mixture of Connemara stone and Egyptian sand, and not the Egyptians, who built the pyramids. How many investigative reporters would envy his subsidiary finding that it is the descendants of these Celtic builders, some of them, like Lynch, having adopted Italian names, who dominate the stone and sand business in New York today.

Between the time of my great predecessor, Hercules Mulligan, George Washington's intelligence officer, and another great New York Irishman, William J. Donovan, the United States pretty much forgot about intelligence.

As the outstanding investigative lawyer of his time, Donovan had learned how to gather a huge array of facts, sift and analyze them, assess their meaning, arrive at a conclusion and present it vividly. He persuaded President Roosevelt that it would be critical in fighting a war and preserving the peace to develop and apply this ability on a worldwide scale. By the time Pearl Harbor came, Donovan had gathered hundreds of the finest scholars in America and had them processing geographic, scientific, political and military information in the Library of Congress. Two years later, Donovan had scoured our campuses and mobilized thousands of the finest scholars in America. They were working in Washington and throughout Britain with scholars from Oxford and Cambridge and other great centers of learning in Britain analyzing every military, political, economic and technological aspect of the war and the preparations for peace. In addition, Bill Donovan assembled what had to be the most diverse aggregation ever assembled of scholars, scientists, bankers and foreign correspondents, tycoons, psychologists and football stars, circus managers and circus freaks, safe crackers, lock pickers and pickpockets. He collected playwrights, journalists, novelists, professors of literature, advertising and broadcasting talent. He drew on the great American melting pot to create small teams of Italian Americans, Norwegian Americans, Slavic Americans, Greek Americans. This array of talent was used to create intelligence networks behind enemy lines, to support the resistance forces which oppression always creates, to bring disaffected enemy officers over to our side, to dream up scenarios to manipulate the mind of the enemy in deception and psychological warfare programs.

That was the inception of modern American intelligence. Over the years my predecessors have changed intelligence and made it far more than a simple spy service. They developed a great center of scholarship and research, with as many Doctors and Masters in every kind of art and science as any university campus. They have produced a triumph of technology, stretching from the depths of the oceans to the limits of outer space. Using photography, electronics, acoustics and other technological marvels, we learn things totally hidden on the other side of the world. In the SALT debate, for example, Americans openly discussed the details of the Soviet missiles. These are held most secret in the Soviet Union, but are revealed by our intelligence systems.

We will need to do more and better in the future to cope with the intelligence requirements of our increasingly complex and dangerous world as it generates new threats. In the OSS, we were doing pretty well if we knew where the enemy was and how he was redeploying his forces. For the first twenty years of a peacetime intelligence, most of the effort went to understanding the production and capabilities of weapons. It is only in the last decade that it has dawned upon us that we have been threatened and damaged more by coups and subversion and economic aggression than by military force. We will still devote a large slice of our effort to military estimates and rely very heavily on them in formulating our defense budget and force structures. But they will have to be supplemented by increased efforts to assess economic vulnerabilities and technological breakthroughs. We've also got to identify social and political instabilities--and how they can or are being exploited by propaganda, by subversion, and by terrorism.

Now, let me say a few words about what we face. Our first priority is still the Soviet Union. It has been the number one adversary for 35 years. It is the only country in the world with major weapons systems directly targeted at the United States which could destroy the U.S. in half an hour. For that reason alone, it remains the number one target.

Less lethal but perhaps more dangerous is the threat of worldwide subversion and insurrection and tiny wars of so-called national liberation. Over the last five years we've seen the combination of Cuban manpower, Libyan money and Soviet arms and transport substantially seize and thoroughly threaten the African continent from Angola to Ethiopia and across through the Sudan and Chad to the Western Sahara.

We've seen the same forces take over Nicaragua and threaten to Castroize all of Central America. We see the crossroads and the oil resources of the Middle East, threatened from Iran and Afghanistan from the east, Syria from the north, Yemen from the south and Libya from the west--all loaded with Soviet weapons.

Alongside, sometimes stimulating, sometimes growing out of and sometimes preserving these spreading insurgencies, we see a spreading terrorism on a worldwide scale. I'm not here to draw any conclusions or make any charges, but it is now a fact that within a period of six months we've seen the three most effective centers of strength and hope in the free world--Pope John Paul, Ronald Reagan, and now Anwar Sadat--hit by the bullets of assassins.

So, ladies and gentlemen, we are in a period of great uncertainty and continuing threat which challenges our ability to perceive and understand our will to put aside our differences, concentrate our resources and dedicate ourselves to preserving the heritage which we received and had nourished so well at Fordham and must preserve for our posterity.